



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE
UNIT 31401, BOX 88
APO AE 09360

AESE-B

5 February 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT. Quartermaster Hall of Fame, Distinguished Unit of the Regiment

1. I wholeheartedly endorse the selection of the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) as a Distinguished Unit of the Regiment.
2. The long and proud heritage of this unit has brought significant credit to the Quartermaster Corps in both war and peace. Although now a multi-functional battalion, there is no question its lineage is Quartermaster, and for the many Quartermasters who have proudly served in its ranks, it will always be Quartermaster.
3. This special recognition is long overdue, it is time we designate the "Repel" Battalion as a Distinguished Unit of the Regiment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles A. Preysler", is written over the printed name.

CHARLES A. PREYSLER
COL, IN
Commanding



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE

UNIT 31401, BOX 88

APO AE 09360

AESE-B

5 February 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR: President of the Board, Distinguished Unit of the Quartermaster Regiment,
ATTN: Regimental Officer, CPT Adjutant, Fort Lee, Virginia 23801

SUBJECT: Letter of Recommendation

1. It is without prejudice or reservation that I unequivocally recommend the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) for selection as a Distinguished Unit of the Quartermaster Regiment.
2. I have personally watched this unit's performance in combat operations in Operation Enduring Freedom; the Repel Battalion continues to compile a sterling record of achievement and excellence. The unit is a military standards bearer that has contributed to our nations defense time and time again from Vietnam to the current fight in the Global War on Terrorism.
3. The logisticians of the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) and accomplishments have made it a combat multiplier for the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team and the Southern European Task Force (SETAF). The units rich history, recent deployments and unprecedented training record all support selection of the Repel Battalion as a distinguished unit of the Quartermaster Regiment.
4. Selection would formally recognize what is stated on the Battalion Distinguished Unit Crest; "To our Utmost."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles A. Preysler", is written over a horizontal line.

CHARLES A. PREYSLER
COL, IN
Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 173D BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION
UNIT 31450
APO AE 09319



AESE-SC

2 February 2007

MEMORANDUM THRU:  Commander, 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE, UNIT 31401, BOX 88
APO AE 09360

FOR: Chief OQMG, USA Quartermaster Center, 1201 22d Street, Fort Lee, VA 23801-1601

SUBJECT: Quartermaster Hall of Fame, Distinguished Unit of the Regiment.

1. As the present Commander of the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne), I strongly recommend the unit as a Distinguished Unit of the Quartermaster Regiment.
2. The heritage and legacy of this unit is a long and distinguished testimony to its worthiness for selection. Since 1963, the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) has won many different titles and unit designations. The unit's commitment to the service of our nation has been proven time and time again.
3. Over the forty-four (44) years from initial activation to present, the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) has served during times of hostility to bring peace or preserve democracy. When people around the world have been threatened by famine or natural disaster, the battalion has been there to provide humanitarian relief, combat service support and combat health support. To serve all these calls the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) has maintained a steadfast and high state of operational readiness.
4. This is a proven unit that has carried the creed and legacy of the Quartermaster Regiment down through the years in keeping with the highest military tradition.
5. The Repel Battalion (173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) is truly the Best Serving the Best and deserves recognition as a Distinguished Unit of the Quartermaster Regiment.
6. POC for this memorandum is the undersigned at DSN 314-469-7560, or james.ryan@us.army.mil

TO OUR UTMOST!


JAMES R. RYAN
LTC, QM
Commanding

4 Encl:

1. Letters of Rec
2. Unit Crest & Beret Flash
3. Battalion History

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SUBJECT: Quartermaster Hall of Fame, Distinguished Unit of the Regiment

A UNIT HISTORY

Motto: To Our Utmost

Crest: A silver color metal and enamel device 1 1/8 inches in height consisting of a blue enamel pentagonal fort surmounted by a silver color metal winged bayonet ascending diagonally to dexter, the device on an an arched black enamel scroll inscribed "To Our Utmost" in silver color metal letters.



Significance: The five sides of the pentagonal fort represent five major areas of the battalion's combat support mission, supply, maintenance, transportation, medical service, and administration. The winged bayonet alludes to the airborne qualifications and the secondary mission to fight as Infantry when required.

173d Brigade Support Battalion Flash: A yellow shield shaped embroidered device with a semi-circular base edged with a 1/8 inch (.32 cm) blue border and a 1/8 inch (.32 cm) blue outer border; 2 1/4 inches (5.72 cm) in height and 1 7/8 inches (4.76 cm) in width overall. The beret flash was approved on 8 January 2007.



Beret Flash

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- Constituted 26 March 1963 in the Regular Army as the 173d Support Battalion, and assigned to the 173d Airborne Brigade
- Activated 25 June 1963 on Okinawa
- Relieved 14 January 1972 from assignment to the 173d Airborne Brigade
- Inactivated 21 October 1972 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky
- Activated 16 March 2005 in Vicenza, Italy

173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM (A Brief History):

The 173d Airborne Brigade was constituted on 5 August 1917, as an infantry brigade and organized on 25 August 1917 at Camp Pike, Arkansas as an element of the 87th Infantry Division. The Brigade deployed to France in 1918 as part of the 87th Infantry Division, but did participate in any named campaigns. Returning to the United States, the Brigade was demobilized in January 1919 at Camp Dix, New Jersey. The Brigade was reconstituted on 24 June 1921, in the Organized Reserves, as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173d Infantry Brigade, and assigned to the 87th Infantry Division at Shreveport, Louisiana; organized in December 1921, at Mobile, Alabama; redesignated 23 March 1925, as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173d Infantry Brigade; redesignated 24 August 1936 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173d Infantry Brigade; converted and redesignated, 13 February 1942, as the 87th Reconnaissance Troop and ordered into active military service on 15 December 1942. During World War II, when brigades were eliminated from divisions, Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 173d Infantry Brigade fought in three European campaigns as the 87th Reconnaissance Troop. After the war, the troop reverted to a reserve status and was active from 1947 to 1951 at Birmingham, Alabama. It was inactivated on 01 December 1951 at Birmingham, Alabama and released from assignment to the 87th Infantry Division.

In 1963, the Brigade was allotted to the Regular Army and activated on Okinawa, 26 March 1963, as the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep). Brigadier General Ellis W. Williamson commanded the unit, which was given the charter to serve as the quick reaction force for the Pacific Command. Under BG Williamson, the unit trained extensively, making mass parachute jumps and earning the nickname "Tien Bien" or "Sky Soldiers," from the Nationalist Chinese paratroopers. The Brigade, also nicknamed "The Herd", deployed to Vietnam in May of 1965, and the Brigade was the first major ground combat unit of the United States Army to serve there. The 173d Airborne Brigade was the first to go into War Zone D to destroy enemy base camps, introduced the use of small long-range patrols, and conducted the only U.S. battalion sized element to conduct a combat parachute jump in the Vietnam conflict, on 22 February 1967, (Operation Junction City). The 173 Airborne Brigade fought in the Iron Triangle and blocked NVA incursions at Dak To during some of the bloodiest fighting of the war in the summer and fall of 1967, culminating in the capture of Hill 875. Elements of the Brigade conducted an amphibious assault against NVA and VC forces as part of an operation to clear the rice-growing lowlands along the Bong Song littoral.

The 1st and 2nd Battalions, 503d Infantry were the first Army combat units from the 173d sent to the Republic of South Vietnam, accompanied by the 3rd Battalion, 319th Artillery. They were supported by the 173d Support Battalion, 173d Engineers, Troop E, 17th Cavalry and D/16th Armor. The First Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment and the 161st Field Battery of the Royal New Zealand Army were later attached to the Brigade during 1965. In late August 1966, the 173d received a third U.S. infantry battalion, the 4-503 In (ABN) from Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The 3-503 In (ABN) joined the Brigade at Tuy Hoa in September 1967, following its reactivation and training at Fort Bragg, North

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Carolina. Another unit assigned was Co N, 75th Infantry (Ranger). At its peak in Vietnam, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) had nearly 3,000 soldiers assigned.

The troopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade wear their combat badges and decorations with pride. During more than six years of continuous combat in Vietnam, the brigade earned 14 campaign streamers and four unit citations. Sky Soldiers serving in Vietnam received 13 Medals of Honor, 32 Distinguished Service Crosses, 1,736 Silver Stars and over 6,000 Purple Hearts. There are over 1,790 Sky Soldiers' names on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. The Brigade departed Vietnam in August 1971, redeployed to Fort Campbell, Kentucky in September 1971, and subsequently deactivated on January 14, 1972.

Of the 13 Medal of Honor Recipients; one of our very own was Chaplain (Maj.), Joseph Watters, U.S. Army, Company A, 173d Support Battalion, 173d Airborne Brigade. Place and date: Near Dak To Province, Republic of Vietnam, 19 November 1967. Entered service at: Fort Dix, N.J. Born: 17 January 1927, Jersey City, N.J. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Chaplain Watters distinguished himself during an assault in the vicinity of Dak To. Chaplain Watters was moving with one of the companies when it engaged a heavily armed enemy battalion. As the battle raged and the casualties mounted, Chaplain Watters, with complete disregard for his safety, rushed forward to the line of contact. Unarmed and completely exposed, he moved among, as well as in front of the advancing troops, giving aid to the wounded, assisting in their evacuation, giving words of encouragement, and administering the last rites to the dying. When a wounded paratrooper was standing in shock in front of the assaulting forces, Chaplain Watters ran forward, picked the man up on his shoulders and carried him to safety. As the troopers battled to the first enemy entrenchment, Chaplain Watters ran through the intense enemy fire to the front of the entrenchment to aid a fallen comrade. A short time later, the paratroopers pulled back in preparation for a second assault. Chaplain Watters exposed himself to both friendly and enemy fire between the 2 forces in order to recover 2 wounded soldiers. Later, when the battalion was forced to pull back into a perimeter, Chaplain Watters noticed that several wounded soldiers were lying outside the newly formed perimeter. Without hesitation and ignoring attempts to restrain him, Chaplain Watters left the perimeter three times in the face of small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire to carry and to assist the injured troopers to safety. Satisfied that all of the wounded were inside the perimeter, he began aiding the medics--applying field bandages to open wounds, obtaining and serving food and water, giving spiritual and mental strength and comfort. During his ministering, he moved out to the perimeter from position to position redistributing food and water, and tending to the needs of his men. Chaplain Watters was giving aid to the wounded when he himself was mortally wounded. Chaplain Watters' unyielding perseverance and selfless devotion to his comrades was in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

On 12 June 2000, the 173d Airborne Brigade and its subordinate units (1-508th IN (ABN), 2-503rd IN (ABN), 501st Forward Support Company, D Battery, 3-319th Airborne Field Artillery, 173rd Combat Support Company, 74th Long Range Surveillance Detachment, and HHC, 173rd Airborne Brigade) were reactivated on Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy, where it serves as European Command's only conventional airborne strategic response force for the European Theater. 'Sky Soldiers' continue the distinction of honored service earned through service dating back to World War I, and proudly represent the airborne fighting spirit with routine training deployments to Bosnia, Kosovo, Hungary, Tunisia, Morocco, Germany, Italy, Czech Republic, "Operation Iraqi Freedom I" (OIF I) and "Operation Enduring Freedom VI" (OEF VI).

On 26 March 2003, as part of OIF I, the 173rd Airborne Brigade 'Sky Soldiers' conducted a combat parachute assault onto Bashur Drop Zone in northern Iraq to establish a northern front as part of Operation Northern Delay. The 173rd Airborne Brigade continued to move south onto the town of Kirkuk, Iraq and established freedom. The Brigade's battle space reached as far south as Jamal Hamrin, east to the Iranian border and west to the city of Al Hawejah. A number of battalion and company missions were executed, with major engagements occurring initially in Irbil, combat operations in Kirkuk and in villages and towns surrounding Tuz. The Brigade swept back through Al Hawejah in late December of 2003 to retake the area from pro-Saddam insurgents. The Sky Soldiers returned home after

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a long year of hard work, dedication, and professionalism in March 2004. These deployments are an important part of the USEUCOM theater engagement strategy, by demonstrating both a commitment to preserving stability in Europe and the ability to provide immediate response to crisis situations throughout the world. Nine 'Sky Soldiers' made the ultimate sacrifice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. One Sky Soldier was awarded the Silver Star during the operation. The sacrifices made by these Sky Soldiers contributed greatly toward establishing a safe and secure environment for the people of Iraq.

Beginning in January of 2005, the 173rd Airborne Brigade was once again called upon to do their part in the Global War on Terror, beginning their deployment in support of OEF VI to Afghanistan. The Brigade deployed to the rugged mountains of Afghanistan, as part of the Combined Joint Task Force-76. The 'Sky Soldiers' helped to reconstruct and rebuild Afghanistan by ensuring a safe and secure election for the people of Afghanistan as they voted in the National Assembly Elections in Regional Command South and East. Sky Soldiers fought the Taliban and Al Qaeda in the Provinces of Helmand, Zabul and Kandahar, with some of the most significant combat actions occurring in Zabul and Kandahar Provinces. Units that fought under Task Force Bayonet (173rd Airborne Brigade) in the South were 2-503rd IN (Airborne), 3-319th Airborne Field Artillery, 173rd Support Battalion, 74th Long Range Surveillance Detachment, 173rd Combat Support Company, Legion Company, 1-508th IN (Airborne), and D Company, 2-504th Parachute Infantry Regiment. In the rugged, border Province of Paktika, 1-508th IN (Airborne) and the Brigade's D Battery, 3-319th Airborne Field Artillery conducted numerous combat actions against a determined enemy while fighting under Task Force Devil (1st Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division). A total of 22 Task Force Bayonet and 173rd Airborne Brigade soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice while attempting to secure a safe environment for the citizens of Afghanistan. Five Sky Soldiers were awarded the Silver Star for their heroism, bravery and valor during this operation. The outstanding and stellar performance of these soldiers and of the entire Brigade continues to make a difference on a daily basis as coalition forces now providing security for the citizens of Afghanistan do so knowing that they are securing a peaceful future for the population.

The 173^d Airborne Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) is the core of a rapid reaction U.S. Army-lead joint task force capable headquarters; trained and ready combat forces capable of deploying anywhere within 24 hours of alert. 173d ABCT is a rapid reaction and crisis response force for missions throughout the spectrum of operations. 173d ABCT is also an instrumental part of the European Command's security cooperation program. Presently, the 173d ABCT is made up of the 1-503D IN, 2-503D IN, 1-91 CAV, 4-319th AFAR, 173d Brigade Special Troops Battalion (STB), and the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (BSB).

Most recently, as part of their rich history, the 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) continued to provide world class combat service support to the 173d ABCT. On 20 September 2006, A Co 173d Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne) was recognized as the USAREUR Winner for Category Level IV (A) Support Activity, Bamberg, Germany.

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Campaign Participation Credit:

Vietnam Defense

Counteroffensive

Counteroffensive, Phase II

Counteroffensive, Phase III

Tet Counteroffensive

Counteroffensive, Phase IV

Counteroffensive, Phase V

Counteroffensive, Phase VI

Tet 69/Counteroffensive

Summer-Fall 1969

Winter-Spring 1970

Sanctuary Counteroffensive

Counteroffensive, Phase VII

Consolidation I

Decorations:

- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered DAKTO
- Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army), Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1965-1967
- Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army), Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1969
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1965-1970
- Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal, Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1969-1971

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:
